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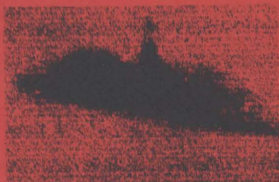
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"Excellent!"

THE BIG GREY MAN OF BEN MACDHUI & OTHER MOUNTAIN PANICS (part 1)

ANDY ROBERTS

*'Though your nerves be of steel, and your mind says it cannot be,
you will be acquainted with that fear without a name, that
intense dread of the unknown that has pursued mankind from
the very dawn of time.'*

Richard Frere[1]

The past eighty years has seen The Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui become a staple for authors and journalists writing about Scottish legends. With the exceptions of the Loch Ness Monster and the Bonnybridge UFO hotspot it is arguably Scotland's best known example of strange phenomena. So much has been written about the Big Grey Man that one could be forgiven for believing it is a well-attested experience with tens if not hundreds of witnesses. If only it were that simple! When put under the microscope, away from the conventions of story telling or the obligations of having to make a profit, the Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui (BGM), like the majority of other fortean phenomena, takes on a completely different appearance.

It's not my intention here to go over every last word which has been written about the BGM, nor to list each and every possible sighting and theory, rather to give an overview of the phenomenon and an analysis of the main sightings and explanations. Nor is it my intention to 'explain away' or to 'debunk' the phenomenon completely. Rather to broaden the discussion with some completely new case material and ideas which may shift encounters with the BGM into a class of experience to that which it occupies at the moment.

Witnesses to the phenomenon known as the Big Grey Man describe how they have variously encountered footsteps, a sensation of 'presence', sightings of a large hominid and an overpowering sense of panic whilst on the mountain called Ben Macdhui. The experience is terrifying enough to compel witnesses to flee in blind panic, often for several miles. Given that this takes place on rocky, dangerous ground, often in weather conditions involving mist and snow, we should not underestimate the power of the experience. The phenomenon is usually, but not always, experienced by solitary witnesses. Accounts and theories of the phenomenon have been detailed in numerous books, magazines and newspapers

from 1925 to as recent as 1998. Anyone wishing to gain a more general insight into the phenomenon and surrounding issues is advised to follow up the references given in this article and to certainly obtain Affleck Gray's excellent, if unstructured, book on the subject, which is written in the spirit of true fortean enquiry.[2]

Ben Macdhui, at 1309 metres (4296 ft), is the second highest mountain in the U.K. and lies in the heart of the mountain range known as the Cairngorms. The mountain comprises of a high plateau with a sub-arctic climate and is often covered in snow for months at a time. Weather conditions can be extreme and unpredictable. Sadly the Cairngorms have been defaced by ski-lifts and restaurants but until recently have remained remote, requiring considerable physical effort and mountaineering to navigate successfully. The wild nature and relative inaccessibility of the area has contributed to their popularity and the Cairngorms have been a playground for climbers, walkers, skiers, naturalists and those who love the high and lonely places for hundreds of years. Ben Macdhui has several spellings and its English translation is Gaelic for *hill of the son of duff*. [3]

Like any other area of land be it mountain, plain, or urban town-scape Ben Macdhui and its environs have a large body of oral and written folklore which encompass phenomena which broadly fall into the fortean and paranormal fields [4]. The majority of the folklore from the Cairngorm area refers to disparate phenomena which need not concern us here, save to recognize that the BGM does not exist as a discrete phenomenon.

Although the first recorded Big Grey Man experience as described earlier did not take place until 1891, and was not made public until 1925, there are antecedents to the matter which set the phenomenon in some geographic, folkloric and historical context.

In 1791 poet James Hogg, known as the Ettrick Shepherd, described seeing a huge figure on Ben Macdhuil whilst tending his sheep. As he watched the halo which had formed around him due to the combination of sunshine and mist he suddenly noticed a huge, looming figure. It was vaguely human in shape and he imagined it to be the devil. Hogg fled in terror, not stopping until he reached fellow shepherds. The next day he saw the same figure under similar climatic conditions.

'It was a giant blackamoor, at least thirty feet high, and equally proportioned, and very near me. I was actually struck powerless with astonishment and terror. My first resolution was, if I could keep the power of my limbs, to run home and hide myself below the blankets with the Bible beneath my head.'

But instead of fleeing he stood his ground, determined to trace the source of the figure. Fear gave way to astonishment when he removed his hat and found the 'devil' mimicking this and his subsequent actions. Hogg believed that the phenomenon, which had initiated the terror a day earlier, was in fact an uncommon natural phenomena known as the 'Brocken Spectre'. [5]

The Brocken Spectre, so named because the summit of the Brocken in Germany's Harz Mountains was one of the places it was first recorded from, is a dramatic natural effect with many variations. Essentially it is formed when the observer's shadow is cast onto mist by sunlight. The experience is dependent on the relationship between factors such as the brightness and angle of the sun, thickness of the mist, presence and intensity of rain or wind and the position of the observers. The resulting effect can range from the simple 'shadow' effect of the viewer to grossly distorted, moving images of what appears to be one or more giants. In all cases, however dramatic or terrifying to the witness, the Brocken Spectre is just one of nature's free light shows. It has been invoked by many writers to 'explain' the BGM and may have some relevance in a number of the experiences. But the Brocken Spectre is only a small part of the whole story. [6]

Several writers on the BGM have referred to an article which appeared in the 1831 edition of the Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal. The witnesses, Sir Thomas Lauder and friends were descending Macdhuil in mist when initially they each saw their own Brocken Spectre, but not that of their two companions.

This effect is due to the fact that a body of mist is not an opaque surface, but a constantly shifting matrix of water particles. Thus the witnesses' position will determine how many Brockens they will see. At fifty yards apart Lauder and his companions could only see their own Brocken. When they moved close together they could all see each others. [7]

In *The Cairngorm Mountains* John Hill evocatively describes the Cairngorm experience, skillfully mixing perceptions of natural phenomena with the creative imagination of the mountain goer, finally querying how the traveller would feel '...if he shall discover that he has been accompanied in every step and motion by a shadowy figure of huge proportions and savage mien, flourishing in his hand a great pine-tree....Such are the spirits of the air haunting this howling wilderness...' [8]

Both Hill and Hogg refer to the legend of the 'fahm' as being prevalent in the Ben Macdhuil area. A line in one of Hogg's Cairngorm poems tells of a man who, 'Beheld the fahm glide o'er the fell'. [9] Hill notes of the fahm that 'sometimes the phantom's head is large and his body small'. The legend of the fahm seems to have been first recorded in the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, in the section dealing with the area around Kirkmichael, which also includes Loch Avon and the eastern environs of Ben Macdhuil. However, far from being a giant, this version of the fahm legend describes, '...small quadruped which they call fahm. In summer mornings it issue from its lurking places emitting a kind of glutinous matter fatal to horses....It is somewhat larger than a mole, of a brownish colour, with a large head disproportionate to the body. From this deformed appearance and its noxious quality the word seems to have been transformed to denote a monster, a cruel mischievous person who, in the Gaelic language is usually called fahm-fhear.' [10]

Hastie, in his Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal article on the BGM notes that both Hill and Hogg's interpretation of the legend probably derive from this source. Hastie suggests the word 'fahm' (which doesn't exist in Gaelic) being a misreading of fahm, which means mole and that Grant may have mistaken the Gaelic word for giant - fanhair - as fhear. [11] Hence we have a the initial recording of the legend of a giant mole-like creature whose etymology and representation has been grossly distorted in less than a century, from supernatural poisonous mole-

creature into a giant stick-wielding figure which stalks the mountain plateau.

However there are also legends of giants in the Cairngorm which may have informed Hill and Hogg's poetic speculations. High above Loch Einich, on the slopes of Sgor Gaoith, to the west of Ben Macdhui, is a natural feature called Am Bodach, the Old Man. There is also another stone bearing the name A'Chailleach, the Old Woman. One of the legends attached to these stone giants is that they are locked in eternal combat, doomed to hurl stones at each other.[12] Stones bearing these names are common in Scotland and the legends pertaining to them are similar. The notion of giants in and on the landscape, either personified by rock formations or as creatures from mythology is entrenched in the folklore of these Isles. With the Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui we have one of the few which is part of a living tradition. Whether it is a breathing entity remains to be seen.

Hugh Welsh, camping with his brother by the summit cairn of Ben Macdhui in 1904 heard the type of footsteps which later became synonymous with the BGM. They heard the noise both at night and in daylight describing it as being like '....slurring footsteps as if someone was walking through water-saturated gravel.' Welsh also recalled they were 'Frequently conscious of 'something' near us, an eerie sensation of apprehension, but not of fear as others seem to have experienced'. They questioned the head stalker at Derry Lodge who told them, 'That would have been the Fear Liath Mor you heard.'[13]

Fear Liath Mor is Gaelic for 'Big Grey Man' and if this account is true it is the first known reference to the BGM by name. That it was proffered as an explanation by a local stalker may indicate a larger body of tradition regarding the Big Grey Man which has gone unrecorded.

Moving further into the twentieth century, George Hall in his book *Leaves From A Rambler's Diary*, recounts the experience of an unnamed friend who worked in the Cairngorms. Hall gives few details, remember this was prior to any wide public knowledge of or interest in the Big Grey Man, but it seems his friend had an odd experience on Ben Macdhui involving a 'presence' which frightened him to such an extent he left the mountain, after which the sensation faded.[14]

The Cairngorm Club Journal for 1921 noted a recent letter to the Aberdeen Free Press in which the writer, '....called attention to a myth prevalent in Upper Deeside to the effect that a big spectral figure has been seen at various times during the last five years walking about on the tops of the Cairngorms. When approached, so the story goes, the figure disappears. Moreover, it has got a name - 'Ferlie More', to wit.'[15] Obviously the name 'Ferlie More' is a derivative of the Gaelic *Fear Liath Mor*, or Big Grey Man, again perhaps suggesting the tradition of a local giant.

In 1924 Dr Ernest A Baker's book *The Highlands With Rope and Rucksack* appeared. Here Baker relates the experience of a friend whose job took him into the mountains, a deer stalker or perhaps a shepherd. Alone on Ben Macdhui one day he became aware of a terrifying presence which, as Affleck Gray recounts, 'disturbed him in a manner which was beyond his experience'. Gray makes the point that this was no ordinary fear but something so powerful that Baker's friend fled Ben Macdhui, the terror only subsiding when he reached low ground. Baker also reports how one mountain climber had told him that he would under no circumstances spend any time on Ben Macdhui alone, even in daylight.[16]

That's the pre-history of the BGM. Taking all the evidence into consideration it seems that prior to Collie's 1925 unveiling of his 1891 experience there was a tradition of a giant figure and of 'presences' which cause fear in the Cairngorm regions. Whether any of the foregoing was a template onto which later BGM reports were hung on to or expanded from is debatable.

In discussing the BGM the researcher is immediately confronted with the problem of exactly *what* can be admitted as evidence for its existence. Affleck Gray's book lists numerous alleged BGM encounters and draws in a plethora of other ghosts and paranormal phenomenon encountered on Ben Macdhui.[17] This heady mix gives the impression there are far more BGM encounters than there actually are. There is also the problem relating to the geography of the mystery. Many encounters and experiences attributed to the BGM are not actually *on* Ben Macdhui but from surrounding mountains and valleys. So the first step in any discussion about the BGM is to define *what* constitutes a BGM experience.

My definition, based on all available sources, is as follows:

The experience must contain any or all parts of the core phenomenon. This core phenomenon consists of the following elements:

- * A giant figure.
- * Footsteps being heard.
- * A sensation of terror or panic, strong enough to cause flight.
- * The experience must have taken place on the mountain of Ben Macdhui or in its immediate environs.[18]

This immediately discounts much of the phenomena discussed in Gray's book such as the many odd sounds, singing, chanting, musical notes etc as well as the sightings of figures (especially the ones described as of human size) *at a distance* and unaccompanied by other phenomena. The sounds are almost certainly attributable to natural phenomenon such as the actions of wind, snow and water in an extreme environment. The 'figures' seen at a distance are just that and may well be other climbers. Gray discussed this problem at length and eventually accepts this is likely to be the case.[19]

This definition could be construed as being unnecessarily dismissive of what might be seen as supporting evidence. I will be the first to admit its inadequacies, but when dealing with a phenomenon as mutable (both by witnesses and its commentators) as the BGM it is essential to have some parameters within which to work.

Anyone who has spent any time in wild, mountainous or open country will be well aware of the problems of visual and aural perception. Particularly when alone, especially in poor visibility or in bad weather. The mountaineering literature is scattered with many good examples of these perceptual tricks, of figures being seen, of presences being felt and so on. As an example it is worth quoting the experience of veteran Scottish mountaineer and author W.H.Murray which also took place in the Cairngorms.

'When we started on the last rise to Caim Toul there came a wider clearance than usual. Suddenly Mortimer gripped my arm and pointed uphill through the misty chasm. "Look!" he exclaimed, "Two men crossing to

Glen Einich." Upon looking up at the slope I was duly surprised to see two climbers a long way ahead of us.....I watched them traverse a full fifty feet from east to west across the snow-slope, one about ten yards in front of the other.....We advanced and saw them halt, apparently to wait for us. At a hundred yards range they turned out to be two black boulders. So great was our astonishment that we failed even to laugh at ourselves.'[20]

On a similar note J.A. Rennie writes that, 'Stefannson, the Arctic explorer, tells of an instance when drifting sea mist once so magnified a tiny lemming that he raised his rifle in the belief that he had come upon a musk-ox.'[21]

The sense of hearing is also widely affected by environmental factors. I recall a backpacking trip in the Lake District during the summer of 1976 when I heard my first name being repeatedly called from behind a wall as I toiled up the Kirkstone Pass at 6 a.m.. Looking over the wall, fully expecting to find tangible evidence of some supernatural agency, I was amused to find a sheep bleating! For further evidence of the frequent unreliability of the senses, in mountain environments, and their concomitant interpretations, I wholeheartedly recommend Dr Helen Ross's book which deals with this and other related matters.[22]

Returning to the definition of the BGM, and by using this definition, an analysis of the BGM literature using primary and secondary sources but discounting rumour and anecdote, reveals the following factors:

- * There are only six 'good' first or well-attested accounts, which fit the criteria.
- *Of these only three took place on the summit or summit plateau of Ben Macdhui.
- *Only two of the six include a 'Big Grey Man', or similar figure.
- *Of those, one was later relegated *by the witness* to either being imagined or as a confabulation of panic and mist.

This interpretation is obviously my own and open to argument but I would suggest that however the sources are looked at none of the factors above would differ by more than one, either way. So bearing that in mind, let's look at the source material

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- 4) *Fortean Studies 3* dealing with Pendle Hill and its environs. Gives a overview of the warp and weft of anomalous experiences which can be found in one region. This principle could be applied to any area.
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- 12) Jim Crumley, *The Heart of the Cairngorms*, Colin Baxter Photography, Grantown-on-Spey, 1997. p.22-27.
- 13) Quoted in Gray, *op. cit.* p.???
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- 16) Dr Ernest A Baker's book *The Highlands With Rope and Rucksack*, Quoted in Gray, *op. cit.* p.89.
- 17) Gray, *op. cit.*
- 18) See also Hastie, *op cit.*, for a similar definition
- 19) Gray, *op. cit.*
- 20) W.H. Murray, *Mountaineering in Scotland*, Dent, London, 1947, p.140 and 214.
- 21) J.A.Rennie, *Romantic Strathspey*, Robert Hale, London 1956, p.83.
- 22) Ross, *op cit.*

BOOK REVIEW by Nikki Wright (YUFOS)

TITLE: Cosmic Crashes
 AUTHOR: Nicholas Redfern
 PUBLISHER: Pocket Books
 ISBN: 0671033069
 PRICE: £6.99 (amazon.co.uk £5.59 +P&P)

You can't go wrong with any of Nick Redfern's books, they are a mine of information. He states, in the introduction to the book, that the most significant breakthrough (for him) came in 1987 with the publication of Timothy Good's *Above Top Secret*. I wonder if Nick has ever took a step back and wondered how many lives he has touched with his own 'significant breakthroughs'

The man wants answers. He's not satisfied with the theories, the studies and reports, the official drivel. So, he goes out there and grabs the bullock by the horns...or is it horn by the b*llocks...? I forget!

The guy's a tireless researcher. This book is up there with the classics. Lots of new cases and chocker block with intrigue and information, it can lead you all over the place. A great ORIGINAL book.

Nick covers among many, many things: documents that 'reinforce the rumours that British authorities had been involved in the secret analysis of UFO debris and alien bodies many years ago, and the CIA were aware of the fact.'

Details given to Dorothy Kilgallen, (a respected American reporter, 'who moved in impressive circles.), apparently by Lord Louis Mountbatten, regards to the examination of the wreckage of a crashed mysterious flying ship, 'It's frightening, but there's no denying that the flying saucers come from another planet.'

DSI (Air Ministry's 'Directorate of Scientific Intelligence') document relating to Marilyn Monroe, that on the day that she died, was allegedly holding a press conference, where she was going to tell (among other things) of J. F. Kennedy's secret knowledge of UFOs and dead aliens...

All this happens in the first 20 pages alone! So if you've not got this book, go and get it, if you already have it, get it out and have another read. I'd forgot just how good this book is.

10 out of 10

A VIEW FROM BRITAIN

THE JENNY RANGLES COLUMN

(Originally published in The MUFON JOURNAL, January 2002)

(Editor's note - Please bear in mind the original date of publication. YUFOS extends its thanks to Jenny & to Dwight Connely, editor of The MUFON Journal, for permission to reproduce this work.)

OFFICIAL DENIABILITY

Since I last wrote about the British Ministry of Defence (MoD) and their approach to UFOs, things have got very interesting indeed. And the consequences of the latest developments must cause us to consider the role that all government departments adopt when it comes to UFO investigation.

Why do the powers that be investigate UFOs?

Because they think an alien presence is monitoring us? I doubt it (although in the early days that probably was viewed as a real possibility).

Because they see a threat to the nation from these encounters? Probably not in the sense that you expect.

Because they want to find the answers to a baffling mystery out of altruism or a spirit of adventure? An altruistic defence agency is a contradiction in terms and if you think that then defence agencies would fund studies into many fascinating things of no relevance at all to the defence of the realm out of sheer curiosity.

No, in truth, it has always been hard to define just why defence agencies still find UFOs so irresistible.

However, insights are coming as in the summer of 2001 the MoD began to make good on its long stated promise to release its records. This came as a prelude to an inevitable 'Freedom of Information Act' in the UK but still (as of early 2002) not in clear sight. Not only did this involve a liberalisation of the secrecy restrictions once in force, but practical demonstrations of the new found willingness for 'Open Government', as Tony Blair calls it.

In the past government records on UFO study were released to the Public Record Office (PRO) in Kew, London, where they could be studied at leisure -but only after 30 years had

elapsed since the last action was taken on them.

So UFOlogists got used to an annual jamboree come New Years Day and looking at the latest 'time capsule' as files from a long forgotten age were released to scrutiny. Indeed, the media often feature stories in and around this period reflecting on the latest revelations from cabinet minutes that are also released to the PRO from another age in this same ritualistic manner.

The change in emphasis as 2001 progressed saw not only the decision to release lots of older documents, but also some more recent ones for which the 30 years were far from concluded. The most dramatic example of the former, was the release of an early study into UFOs carried out by Air Ministry advisers and which formed the basis of a briefing to then Prime Minister Winston Churchill in 1952. This was in the summer of both the Washington DC 'wave' and the Operation Mainbrace incidents when a NATO exercise in Britain was invaded by several high profile UFO sightings.

We have long known that Churchill demanded answers from his air minister for this aerial activity (the memo proving this was released about 12 years ago) but had not seen the report that he was presumably given. The MoD decision to release this (to UFOlogists David Clarke and Andy Roberts who had been on its trail for some time) was a sign of the big changes.

As was the stunning release of the 150 page case file depicting the MoD's attempts to investigate the famous Rendlesham Forest case. As these incidents, well known as one of Britain's biggest cases, happened in late 1980 and the last actions on the MoD file are several years after that, by all normal procedures we should be waiting for release of the Rendlesham file until well into the next

decade.

Position statement

So times have changed, but what have these dramatic revelations told us about British government UFO investigation?

They reflect the position statement that they have trotted out year in, year out, since I have been an active UFOlogist. Write to the department charged with responsibility (an Air Staff division run by civil service clerical officers - of which the most famous is Nick Pope who was at this office between 1991 and 1994) and they would have a reply ready to send out that barely altered for decades.

If you asked why the MoD investigated UFOs they would tell you that they did so in order to establish whether these sightings had any defence implications. Although they could not presume that no case ever would, they were satisfied that there were prosaic explanations for the vast majority of the reports and no case that they had seen had offered defence implications.

How you reacted to this claim probably depended upon your own views about UFOs. On the one hand it sounds very reasonable. After all we do know that 95% of all UFO sightings are really IFOs, and so no conceivable defence threat. Equally, even with the puzzling cases, evidence of any overt hostility or defence implication in a 'war of the worlds' sense is virtually nil. Real UFOs could be many different things that we haven't fully understood yet. But there is no real grounds to suggest that they are an alien invasion force. If they were likely by now the earth would be a pile of rubble drifting through space.

Defence implications

On the other hand, if you think more deeply about this comment, things start to look more curious. That term defence implications surely has a broader meaning than exposing an alien threat. For instance, what if some UFOs are a type of atmospheric energy that can interfere with sophisticated computer controls and potentially cause aircraft to malfunction. There is at least a possibility of this. Would it not be regarded as a matter of defence significance to find out the causes, and try to eliminate them, especially if multi million pound aircraft that might be used to defend the country were experiencing such difficulties when confronting these UFOs?

Equally, what if there were things that you could learn from studying UFO data that offered you militaristic advantages? For instance, if some UFOs (as I believe) are really extreme forms of ball lightning, then understanding these cases could provide advances in plasma physics and new propulsion methods. These would inevitably be subject to covert research, since you would be interested in getting an advantage over your enemies - and the best way to do that would not be to openly admit what you think some UFOs might be. But defence implications behind a few UFO cases would, in that respect, clearly exist.

The suspicion has to be that the MoD (and, of course, by inference government agencies all over the planet) have not maintained UFO monitor departments for no reason. If there really never has been a single case over 50 years that has defence implications then the point of expending finance to keep that UFO monitor in business seems hard to grasp. One assumes that it was maintained because there was a realistic chance that new things were being discovered. Otherwise why bother?

End Game

Interestingly, in November 2001 (although many media sources did not pick up on this until early 2002) the MoD tried to answer this question. The Blair government was faced with crumbling public services. Hospital patients were being shipped off to France and Germany to relieve massive waiting lists on the cash strapped National Health Service. Schools were crying out for more money. And the rail system in a country that had invented this mode of transport was proven to be the slowest, least funded and most expensive in modern Europe needing billions of pounds to revive its fortunes.

Now that the MoD had released its records, apparently showing that they knew 50 years ago that most UFO sightings were explicable, claiming no evidence that any were alien, and adamant that none had ever had any defence implications - the contradiction brought about by maintaining a UFO monitor was suddenly apparent.

UFOlogists, of course, had been saying this for years, but they don't matter in the scheme of things. Now that these facts were available to all - including the opposition party and investigative journalists - the dangers were all too evident. Someone would sooner or later

point out the political folly of chasing apparently unimportant lights in the sky at the taxpayers expense whilst schools, hospitals and trains fell to pieces for lack of money.

The result was predictable. The MoD announced that they had decided to shut up shop and close their UFO department altogether. In a move only 32 years behind the USA and its Project Blue Book, the MoD explained that it was now felt unnecessary, as nothing of defence implications had emerged.

Life after death

Of course, as in the US, reports of the death of British government interest in UFOs have been exaggerated. The civil service unit of the Air Staff always was a bit of a public show to reassure folk that something was being done - although that rarely extended beyond taking a few phone calls, shuffling a few papers and writing the odd letter.

It certainly was not in the same league as Captain Ruppelt jetting off to a landing site and spending three days interviewing eyewitnesses. It was a public relations exercise, never an active UFO investigation department.

The stunning ineptitude with which the Air Staff handled the Rendlesham Forest landings in early 1981 is proof of this.

After all, if you receive a report from a senior USAF officer, endorsed by the British squadron leader whom you have sent to watch over the base, and that reports claims that a UFO flattened a hole in some trees, left marks on the ground and radiation levels considered unusual - all in a park used by picnickers and local villagers to walk their dogs - what do you do?

Do you, close off the forest under some pretext, right away, and rapidly establish whether there is any threat from this radiation before reopening it and then carefully establish what was or was not witnessed?

If you are seriously investigating UFOs or concerned about potential defence implications, of course you do.

But the MoD did no such thing. They had no idea what had happened (and months later admit as such in this report). They also waited weeks, then wrote a memo to ask if any other intelligence agency was interested in

following up these claims of excess radiation. They admitted that the radiation levels looked a bit high, but did not establish how high with any haste. And even two months later (by which point half of East Anglia could have had radiation poisoning!) did they even wake up.

In this case such lethargy was justified. The radiation levels were probably not dangerous. But the lackadaisical manner in which any follow up proceeded indicates that the Air Staff lost any right to be considered serious about UFOs long before they shut up shop. They could have been wrong with terrible consequences.

Of course, as in the US, other departments will be maintaining a watching brief. There have always been shady associations from defence intelligence units and scientific and technical analysts. The MoD data reveals this but rarely the nature of their deliberations and as yet their files are not open to the new liberal policies. Who knows if they ever will be opened up and my bet is they are where the more interesting research, investigation, analysis and commentary did go on and still goes on.

Closing down the Air Ministry UFO staff gets the media off their back and makes the British government seem to be moving with the times into a new era where it must account for all expenditure and not waste precious funds on things that they publicly insist are of no consequence.

But this is really just another MoD spin that will likely fool the media but should not pull the wool over the eyes of UFOlogy.

I quite agree that there may be nothing earth changing behind UFOs and I support the MoD line that they are not a threat in any overt sense. They never were really the province of a department whose primary goal is the defence of the realm. UFOs are properly a scientific mystery that is best handled by people equipped to probe and analyse, not track and shoot down.

So I, for one, do not mourn the MoD announcement. I welcome it. But not for one minute do I believe that the Ministry are unaware of certain possible UFO ramifications for their own work and I suspect the security cleared scientists and RAF intelligence operatives are as active as ever in keeping track of any new data. They are also probably delighted to be doing so in an age where - as

the MoD will no doubt now not tire of telling us - there is no official UFO investigation because the MoD closed this down in 2001 after it led nowhere.

That is the line you will be seeing from the media in the months and years to come. But it would be wise not to simply take them at their word.

AN ON-LINE CHAT WITH JON DOWNES AND RICHARD FREEMAN

On Thursday 27th February, the Friends of YUFO's msn site paid host to guests from the Centre for Fortean Zoology (CFZ), Jon Downes and Richard Freeman. The interview took place in the FOY chatroom, and was the first of what we hope to be a regular event. The following transcript has been "cleaned up" (in more ways than one!) and edited to provide the highlights of the entertaining and informative evening.

DAVE BAKER : First of all, I'd like to thank Jon Downes and Richard Freeman of the Centre for Fortean Zoology for joining us tonight

JON DOWNES: Thanks for having us

DAVE: First of all, Jon, can you give us a brief rundown on the CFZ's latest adventureThe Hunt For The Bolam Beast

JonD : I thought (at first) you meant sending Graham to the off license...

JonD : First of all, is everyone aware of what I mean by the term "BHM?"

DAVE BAKER: Big Hairy Monster

JonD : Yup. Well, we have been interested in reports of BHM phenomena from Britain and Europe for some time... you have to remember that BHM reports come from every culture on earth, from the Eskimos to the Maoris, and whereas in some cases they seem to refer to 'real' flesh and blood creatures in other cases - like those in Britain and Europe and some of the cases in north America, they seem to refer to less tangible entities

Over the last ten years there have been a smattering of BHM reports from the UK - most up to 1998 are included in a paper we wrote for *Fortean Studies*. But on the whole there are no more than one or two a year and many of them have been fakes. However in mid November last year a geezer called Ray Wallace, who was a notorious practical joker

and bigfoot hoaxter died, and newspapers all over the world proclaimed "Bigfoot is Dead"

Within days a surprisingly large pile of reports started coming in from all over the UK and by mid January it was obvious that there were too many to be hoaxes, and so we went to one of the biggest hotspots - Bolam Lake in Northumberland- to investigate for ourselves

I was still pretty sure they would be hoaxes, and had been tipped off that someone from a local newspaper was gonna jump out at us dressed in a monkey suit, so we went in toolled up...with a paintball gun... I wanted to splatter the bugger with yellow paint! But as it turned out things were very weird indeed.

On the first day all our electronic equipment failed; batteries were flattened or completely knackered, four mobile phones, the walkie-talkies, my laptop battery and the tape recorder all went down, and one of the witnesses car batteries as well.

It was obvious that there was something very weird going on. We interviewed two witnesses that night and another the next morning before returning to the lake on the Saturday and on the Saturday evening I had my sighting.

By the way, (the next section) is taken verbatim from the new issue of *Animals & Men* which is why it is in the third person...

As the dusk gathered at about 5 o'clock, Jon again heard the raucous noise of the rooks that he had reported just before dawn. Suddenly, once again, they fell silent and one of the

Twilight Worlds members shouted that she could hear something large moving around amongst the undergrowth. Jon ordered all of the car drivers present to switch on their headlights and to put them on to full beam. He did not hear any noise in the undergrowth although other people present did.

Eight people were watching the woods and five of them, including Jon saw an enormous man shaped object run from right to left, disappear, and then a few moments later run back again. When the expedition returned on Monday, they conducted experiments to find out exactly how far away the creature - if it was a creature - was from the excited onlookers. Using Richard Freeman as a model, Jon made a fairly accurate estimate that the creature had been a hundred and 34 feet away from him at the time of his sighting. He also estimated that the creature had run along a distance of between 12 and 18 feet.

DaveB: Okay, thanks Jon, ready for questions about Bolam lake?

JonD: Of course, fire away

Rick : Did you manage to shoot at it?

JonD: Nah, it was far too fast, and anyway by that time I'd given up on the idea

DaveB: Didn't you lay a sandtrap ?

JonD : Yeah we did but no results whatsoever...

DaveB: Would the "creature" have passed over the trap though? (and left footprints?)

JonD : the 'creature' paid no attention to the bait....I'm convinced that what I saw was a zooform phenomenon rather than a bona fide new species of animal. You would have to be pretty crazy even by fortean standards to believe in an entire population of eight-foot tall unknown primates living 30 miles from Newcastle City Centre.

JonS : Could be a native of the area...

JonD : Some footprint pictures HAVE been taken from the lake, but I am far from convinced of their veracity

Nikki Wright : What actually do you think these things are?

DaveB: Explain what we mean by "zooform", Jon

JonD : What I saw could not have been flesh and blood - in the way that we understand it anyway These are not animals at all, but are entities or apparitions which adopt or seem to have animal or part-animal form. This is where we, at least partly, enter *X Files* territory. In many ways, these elusive and contentious entities have plagued the science of cryptozoology since its inception - and tend to be dismissed by mainstream science as thoroughly unworthy of consideration. Zooform phenomena seem to be a mysterious blend of paranormal manifestation and mythological icons. .

As I became more deeply involved in the study of zooform phenomena I began to realise that you could no longer study these 'creatures' in isolation. In many cases, zooform phenomena are inextricably linked with a wide range of other paranormal and fortean phenomena, most especially crop circles and UFOs.

DaveB: Mark Martin will be having kittens...

JonD : lol

DaveB : We're big Keel fans (at YUFOS)

JonD : So are we (At the CFZ)

JonD : It is a rarity in these days - UFOlogy seems to have forgotten Keel, and the sad thing is that Keel explains more than anyone else

DaveB: Jon, tell everyone what you told me the other day, about your 'racial memory' theory

JonD: Okay...Imagine millions of years ago when the human race was between five hundred and a thousand little hairy geezers on the plains of East Africa ...Now - by the way, this theory is a mix of Richard Freeman's (he did most of it), mine, and a schoolboy who we met when we lectured to some kids at a local school, so I ain't taking credit for all of this...We are talking about 3000000 years ago...Richard has noticed for years that there seems to be a universal template for monsters...

RICHARD FREEMAN: When I was in Thailand a couple of years ago, I found that they believed in the Naga - the giant serpent dragon, the Garuda - a man bird hybrid, and a giant golden lion.

If you like, these are exactly the same as the three monsters from Southern Cornwall; the Owlman, the Big Cats and Morgawr (*sea monster- DB*) Three million years ago the main predators on our remote ancestors would have been big cats, crocodiles and pythons, giant birds of prey, and also long extinct primates some bigger and some smaller, also African hunting dogs and we believe that these created the templates for the monsters that mankind still reports today

JonD: You know the way that there are parts of the body which have become redundant? The appendix for example? Male nipples, the coccyx... Carl Sagan propounded the concept of fossil memory and we have just taken it a bit further... We believe that the race memory of these primal fears is buried deep inside every human being on the planet, and that under certain circumstances they can be released,

Now, the human brain is like a computer, and u know how even deep inside Windows XP for example there is a programme written in Dos or BASIC or Loglan or whatever trying to get out. We believe that under certain circumstances, EMF phenomena like those at Bolam Lake can cause the human computer to reboot, and we can relive these primal fears...

RF: But because these are deep in the psyche of every human being - we believe that these can externalise themselves like a tulpa and achieve some degree of objective reality...

DaveB: A tulpa...that's a "thought-form" yeah?

RF: Yeah... Each of the ancient fear-animals can be related to a modern monster archetype; crocodiles and pythons become dragons... The huge raptors like the Martial Eagle become the winged things like Mothman, the Thunderbird etc. The hunting dogs become black dogs and the big cats become... errrr... big cats.

But we ain't saying that all monsters are zooform - for most, if not all these categories there are real live animals which are awaiting discovery

DaveB: Mark Martin has a question concerning tulpas... Is it true that there is a buddist temple near Bolam lake... because John Keel talks about monks in the Himalayas creating tulpas which may have been interpreted as the yeti...

RF: Yes, but it is Thai Buddhist not the Tibetan Buddhists who have a history of creating tulpas. We ain't been able to contact them 'cos the website is shite and we ain't got any further info yet

JonD: Yeah but they were lamaists...

RF: ...And the yeti is one of the creatures that is most likely to be a real animal not a tulpa

JonD: We believe that it is one of the most likely to be found...probably an evolved descendent of a Pleistocene beastie called Gigantopithecus blackii

DaveB: I never had a problem believing that the yeti *could* exist as an unidentified primate... I mean, when was the gorilla 'officially' discovered?

RF: Lowland Gorilla 1840s, mountain gorilla 1904

DaveB: I suppose that early reports of these beasts would have appeared crazy...

RF: Yeah, they were completely dismissed as an ogre from native folklore, as were the okapi and the komodo dragon.

DaveB: What about the yowie? (*Australia's BHM-*)

RF: That is another problem - there are very, very few placental mammals in Australiasia/oceania

DaveB: But it does feature in aboriginal folklore?

RF: Yes it does - there are cave paintings of what have been interpreted as yowies...(But) The only primates known in those regions are humans

JonD: So we would to categorise them as zooform

DaveB: Can zooform creatures have a certain physicality... to leave tracks, etc?

JonD: It appears so yes - but our belief is that this only happens tangentially

DaveB: I'm sure that you guys will be aware of the 'Phillip' experiments...

JonD : yeah

DaveB: Any similarities? (with zooforms)

JonD: Very much so... My analogy is from the pantomime of Peter Pan. You know the bit when all the kids in the audience have to clap their hands if they believe in fairies, and if enough children believe then Tinkerbell doesn't die.

DaveB: Yeah...hey, if enough of us stop believing in Jeffrey Archer, will he die?

(The next lengthy section has been edited to prevent legal proceedings of all kinds, as the conversation turned to a general – but certainly deserved – attack on the disgraced Tory peer.)

JON: or the bit from *Woodstock* (I wish Andy Roberts were here), when Wavy Gravy says "man, if we all chant loud enough it will stop raining"... well I believe that zooform phenomena exist BECAUSE we believe in them not the other way round.

DaveB: Jon Slater asked why don't we find skeletons of cryptids in the wild?

JonD...The word 'cryptid' comes from the Greek 'Kryptos' meaning hidden...they are bloody rare, and even known species are difficult to find dead. The stoat is the second most common carnivore in the UK. and in 30 years I've only seen three dead ones

RF: I've only seen one...once an animal is dead scavengers descend on it - it's a free lunch and animals descend on them. Even with bones rodents eat them, and clothes moths: its what they ate before they were commensal on humans.

Also, I would add that when we have found physical remains of cryptids, they have usually been lost due to incompetence like the bones that James Stewart smuggled back from Pangboche which were those of a yeti

DaveB: Okay guys, Mark Martin wants to know what you make of the mkoele mbembe?

RF: I don't think it's a sauropod dinosaur because...1. there is no evidence of sauropod dinosaurs surviving the late cretaceous extinction event, 2. The creature is semi-aquatic and sauropod dinosaurs lived on land like elephants or giraffes. It's probably a giant semi-aquatic monitor lizard.

DaveB: But it would still be a previously unidentified species?

JonD: Yeah

RF: There is evidence that *Megalanania prisca* - the giant Pleistocene monitor lizard of Australia is still around but this would be longer, thinner and adapted for a semi aquatic existence

DaveB: What's your take on Thunderbirds...

RF: They seem to fall into 2 distinct groups. One is the feathered bird-like type - the other is the "pterodactyl" type. It has been theorised that the feathered ones are surviving teratons - the giant new world vultures from several million years ago till about 10,000 years ago. Like all new world vultures teratons were not raptors - they were more closely related to storks, hence they couldn't grasp with their claws which means they couldn't pick human beings off the ground like the Marlon Lowe case (1977)

The reptilian ones seem to have more in common with worldwide dragon lore, which is much more believable than pterosaurs surviving 65,000,000 years.

I think both of them are zooform rather than flesh and blood

Believe it or not we have heard reports of a helicopter sized pterosaur in Bradford in the last few months...there is a historical precedent in the Pennines pterodactyl. Do you guys have any news on that?

DaveB: Only what I read on the internet. I think Andy Roberts had a file on pteranodons somewhere up north...can't remember where exactly but I can find out...Andy thinks they were herons

JonD: I'm surprised he didn't think they were members of the Grateful Dead!

DaveB: What do you guys think about Sea Serpents?

JonD: It is indisputable that there are large elongate sea creatures awaiting scientific discovery. Our best guess is that they are mostly giant eels, elongate sharks, and primitive whales (archaeocetes)

DaveB: Can you guys elaborate on a story I heard years ago? It involved some deep sea trawler (I think) finding a creature in their nets after a terrible storm...It looked exactly like a larval eel, but when they extrapolated it's size,

they figured that the adult would be 50' long or more?

RF: That larval eel turned out not to be a larval eel after all. They thought it was a giant eel larva but it wasn't, it was a deep sea fish.

DaveB: That's a real disappointment... I loved that story for years!

RF: But that doesn't mean that there ain't giant eels...

RF: What first got you guys into Fortean?

DaveB: I was interested in this stuff for as long as I can remember...But I got a book, *Mysteries of The Unknown* for Christmas one year, a large format kids book

JonD: I became involved in much the same way

DaveB: It was divided into 3 sections, UFOs, Ghosts and Monsters-

JonD: Richard became involved through *Dr Who*...he fell in love with monsters

DaveB: That's the same as me...when I was about 10, I didn't have posters of footballers on my wall, I had Frankenstein and Dracula

JonD : I had Led Zeppelin

DaveB: wot, when u were 10?

JonD : ermm....

Nik : I had the Sex Pistols

RF: I had John Pertwee and Tom Baker

DaveB: Mind you, I did have posters of lesbian vampires too...well, the non-naked ones from the Hammer films anyway

JonD: awwwwwwwwwwwwww

DaveB: I suppose the idea that there might be *real* monsters blew me away...

JonD: Yeah, us too

DaveB: -and of course, the real clincher was *Close Encounters*

JonD : This has been our life quest

DaveB: which was almost a religious experience for me

JonD : It takes a certain sort of mindset but this is what we do all the time

DaveB: The cases that really interest me are the 'one-off' ones...I absolutely loved the Vietnamese bat-woman report from Keel's *Mothman Prophecies*...

RF: As a kid, I got sexually aroused by that One...

DaveB: Yeah, 'cos it mentions she had breasts

JonD : (Lol)

RF: The painting they had of that in *The Unexplained* was really sexy - big tits and bare feet

DaveB: (lol)...Was that one ever followed up, or was it just one of Keel's stories?

JonD: I wouldn't like to hazard a guess, but there was a lot of acid in Vietnam...

NEXT????????????????????

DaveB: Okay, Goatman...that's a question, not an insult...

RF: I think it's just satyr...(rofl)

DaveB: My 5 year old boy Matthew saw a kids' programme with Goatman on it last year. He was fascinated with it and I thought I was bringing up the youngest cryptozoologist ever, but it just gave him nightmares...

RF: It's a teen urban myth but the only foundation is a couple of sasquatch report from 40 years ago

DaveB: Have you guys ever chased after so-called "Alien Big Cats?"

JonD: Ohhhh yeaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah...

DaveB: Do you think that there are "real" Big Cats as well as zooform Big Cats?

JonD : Definitely...I saw a puma in Cornwall in 1997...totally flesh and blood

Nik: Whereabout in Cornwall?

JonD: Between Bolventor and St Neot...May 7th

DaveB: Why do you think that they are rarely caught? I know that some have been, but still...

JonD: 'cos there are very few of them, the people who say there are thousands in the UK are t*ats...there may be 200

DaveB: Say what you mean, Jon...

MarkM: How are ABCs fixed for interbreeding? Can a Leopard mate with a Puma (or Lynx, Jaguar whatever), and if they can, are the offspring sterile?

DaveB: I know that lions and tigers can interbreed -

MarkM: Yeah, tygons and ligers...

RF: Josef Mengele was supposed to have hybridised Pumas and leopards but his records were destroyed in the war. They have been tarred with the Nazi brush somewhat, but it is incontrovertable that Mengele was a great scientist...He also happened to be a complete scumbag but that's the way it goes

DaveB: But do you think that there are zooform big cats too?

JonD: Undoubtedly...sometimes zooform creatures and flesh and blood ones coexist

Nik: How so?

JonD: There are reports of zooform sounding cats and 'real' ones in the same places....

(From this point the chat, loose and spontaneous as it was, faded into less ufological and paranormal realms, and is unsuitable - for reasons of taste and general interest - to be published here! DB)

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 8th April 2003

7:00 - 10:00pm

THE OLD QUEEN'S HEAD

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UFOs:
SUB ROSA*
DOWN UNDER
THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY & GOVERNMENT
ROLE IN THE UFO CONTROVERSY (part 3)
BY BILL CHALKER

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The author is a leading Australian UFO researcher and a contributing editor to the International UFO Reporter. An industrial chemist with an honours science degree from the University of New England he has worked in quality assurance and laboratory management. His book, *The OZ Files - the Australian UFO Story*, was published in 1996. He coordinates the NSW based UFO Investigation Centre (UFOIC).

Bill has allowed his work to be published in Project Red Book on numerous occasions, and it is now my pleasure to begin a major series on Bill's research into the secret investigations of the Australian government and military of UFOs.

Sub Rosa: refers to "under the rose", meaning "in secret".

THE "SEA FURY" ENCOUNTER

One of the most controversial radar visual reports of the fifties occurred on August 31st, 1954. The story leaked out in December, 1954, and made front page headlines. The official navy file on the event remained classified until the Directorate of Naval Intelligence released a copy upon my request in 1982. During his 1973 visit to Australia, Dr. Hynek was able to interview the pilot involved in this famous incident, which became known as the "Sea Fury" encounter. Dr. Hynek made his notes on this interview available to me during my 1984 visit to the Chicago headquarters of his organisation, the Centre for UFO Studies (CUFOS). I, in turn, provided Dr. Hynek with a copy of the official file on the incident.

Lieutenant J.A. O'Farrell was returning to Royal Australian Navy Air Station Nowra after a night cross country in a Sea Fury aircraft. After contacting Nowra at about 1910 hours, O'Farrell saw a very bright light closing fast at one o'clock. It crossed in front of his aircraft taking up position on his port beam, where it appeared to orbit. A second and similar light was observed at nine o'clock. It passed about a mile in from of the Sea Fury and then turned in the position where the first light was observed. According to O'Farrell, the apparent crossing speeds of the lights were the fastest he had ever encountered. He had been flying at 220

knots. O'Farrell contacted Nowra who in turn confirmed that they had two radar "paints" in company with him. The radar operator, Petty Officer Keith Jessop, confirmed the presence of 2 objects near the Sea Fury on the G.C.I. remote display. The two lights reformed at nine o'clock and then disappeared on a north easterly heading. O'Farrell could only make out "a vague shape with the white light situated centrally on top." The Directorate of Naval Intelligence at the time wrote that O'Farrell was "an entirely credible witness" and that he "was visibly 'shaken' by his experience, but remains adamant that he saw these objects"

In a recent interview, "Shamus" O'Farrell described the incident:

I said, "Nowra, this is 921. Do you have me on radar?" And a few seconds later they came back and said, "Affirmative 921. We have you coming in from the west. We have another two contacts as well. Which one are you."

I said, "I think I'm the central one." And so they said, "Do a 180...for identification." So I did a quick 180 and then continued on around and made it a 360 back to where I was going. They said, "Yes, we've got you. You're the centre aircraft." I said that's correct. They then said to me, "Who are the other two aircraft?" and I said, "I don't know. I was hoping you would tell me, because I didn't

think there was anyone up here." They said, "Well there shouldn't be, and they certainly shouldn't be that close to you."

So the conversation went on like this and I was very pleased to be talking to somebody because it gave me a lot of reassurance. With that these two aircraft came in quite close to me and I could really see the dark mass and that they were quite big, but I couldn't make out any other lights or any other form of an aircraft. With that they took off and headed off to the north east at great speed.

I was about to press the button and tell them at Nowra that the two aircraft were departing when Nowra called me up and said, "The other two aircraft appear to be departing at high speed to the north east. Is that correct?" and I said, "Yes!". And they said, "Roger, we'll see if we can track them." They tracked them for a while and then lost them. I came in and landed at 7.30 (1930) and when I got there there were quite a few people waiting for me. I thought it was a bit strange and so they came over, and they said, "You sure you had aircraft out there!", and I said yes. The Surgeon Commander came over and spoke to me. He said did I feel sick, or was I upset. I said no. He ran his hand over my head to see whether I had any bumps. He had a look at me and decided I was okay. So then he said, "Perhaps you'd like to come to the sick bay after you've changed and we'll do an examination." So after I was finished I went up to sickbay and he gave me a more thorough medical, and said, no, I appeared to be all right. I found out later, that at the same time, they checked to make sure I hadn't been drinking before I took off and all that sort of thing."

During this interview, Dr. Hynek's involvement came up:

This man (Hynek) - a professor - had made a study of thousands of sightings all around the world and he had decided my sighting was one of those that he had not been able to explain away by other means. Any way I had a talk with him. He was a very interesting chap and he made the comment that there were about 13 or 15, I don't remember, sightings that he was aware of over the years that were like mine and could not be explained away. The interesting thing he said was that all of these sightings had been made by professional people in aviation. By that he meant they were military pilots, military air crew, civil aviation operators, air traffic controllers, and the like, or airline pilots. These were the ones he was

now (1973) going around meeting the people themselves and investigating. All the others he had written off and had been able to explain down to some other phenomena. It came to the point where he said, "Your sighting cannot be explained away." And he left it at that. To this day I wouldn't know where it came from or where it went.

I have had the opportunity to talk extensively with Shamus O'Farrell. I was particularly interested in how the interview with Dr. Hynek in 1973 came about:

Shamus O'Farrell: "It was done through Sir Arthur Tange, who was secretary of the Department of Defence at the time. Hynek contacted him direct.... Sir Arthur Tange contacted me and said Hynek was coming out. He had written to him, through the US Embassy, to set up a meeting.... And the next thing I knew I had a telephone call one day from Sir Arthur Tange saying that Hynek was coming and he would like me to meet him. I said, well, I haven't got all the facts, there all a bit hazy. So he sent me the two Defence Department files over to read, to refresh it all."

Bill Chalker: "That seems to indicate a high level of interest in Hynek's visit at the time?"

O'Farrell: "Yes, well, I don't think so. All that happened was that it was more of a courtesy because he was a very important guy, Hynek, and they wanted to show him the courtesies etc. As far as Defence was concern it was dead and forgotten but they had not got rid of the files. They kept them. Normally when files like that are written off they are either decided they'll put them in Archives or dispose of them and destroy them. But they had done neither. They had remained in the JIO. They'd kept them. I don't know what they had in mind about it, I never questioned it. I just used them as a means to refresh my memory.

"Later the guy who became the chief Defence scientist, John Farrands, was very interested in it too, and he had done a lot of early investigations in most of the reports when he was chief defence scientist and in the period just before he became chief defence scientist. He had a talk with me. I was a friend of his. I use to meet with him at lunch. He went over it in great detail. He knew it all. He agreed it was something that couldn't be refuted. No matter how hard they tried, and they tried very hard to knock it all back. They checked everything from medical, down to when was the last time I had had a drink..."

Bill Chalker: "That must have been a bit of a concern to you?"

O'Farrell: "Well, I wanted to hush it all up. That sort of investigation made me look a bit of a fool. I was worried it wasn't going to do my career any good. (Apart from the radar witness) it locked in a sighting over the NDB (non directional beacon) at Narulan, at the same time. There happened to be a guy working on the NDB. It was down at the time. He had gone to repair it. He happened to look up at the time because he saw these lights fly overhead. Also the air traffic control officer in the tower at Mascot saw them approaching him. It was all investigated by the then RAAF guy who did it and later it was also investigated by the Joint Intelligence Bureau."

In 1993 I assisted *The Extraordinary* television programme with a recreation of the Sea Fury incident. Shamus O'Farrell, Keith Jessop and I were interviewed on the show. The case stands as one of the best unexplained radar visual UFO cases on record in Australia.

UFOS, DAFI AND JIB

It was not long after this that the RAAF asked JIB to take "the UFO problem" over. On April 1st, 1957, Group Captain A.D. Henderson, the Director of Air Force Intelligence, wrote to W.H. King, the Director of the Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB):

Investigations into reports of UFOs

1. This Department frequently receives reports direct from civilians, or passed on by other departments, of unidentified flying objects. We also receive requests for assistance and advice from various "Flying Saucer Research societies".
2. Many of these reports presumably cover such mundane things as meteorological and astronomical phenomena; others appear to be *inexplicable* [my emphasis - B.C.]. Most of them are outside the aeronautical field.
3. As your branch has now established a scientific Intelligence Section, it would appear that these reports could best be investigated and evaluated by one of your Scientific Research officers, who will have a broader background of knowledge of this type of phenomena than anyone in this Directorate.

4. If you agree that you can accept this commitment I will be glad to make available all the papers which we have acquired, to date, on this subject."

While the official files do not reveal a reply from JIB Director Harry King, Harry Turner, who would later become a JIB scientist and their liaison man with DAFI, told me that JIB rejected the RAAF overture. The clandestine side of JIB did not want "a bar of it", as they considered they would then be caught up in what they regarded as a complex conjectural matter, which might drag them into the limelight - the last thing an intelligence organisation would want. Turner would try to set up a "rapid intervention" UFO team during the late 1960s within the Defence Science and Technical Organisation (DSTO).

Harry Turner's JIB superior was R.H. Mathams, the Director of Scientific Intelligence and author of the book *Sub Rosa - Memoirs of an Australian Intelligence Analyst* (1982). Harry King appointed Bob Mathams as the first Australian scientific intelligence analyst in May, 1955. His initial secondment ended in mid 1957. In October, 1958 he rejoined JIB as the first head of their Scientific Intelligence Branch. Bob Mathams indicated to me that his Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence (DSTI) "had only a marginal interest in UFOs."

"Our analytical resources were limited and I had to take the position that we could not afford to become too involved in investigation of UFO sightings until we had reasonable grounds for believing that they were of foreign - as opposed to alien - origin. We relied on DAFI to make the initial investigations and, at times, assisted in the interpretation of the resulting data."

He advised me that his "interest (as DSTI) in UFO sightings was aroused only when there was sufficient evidence to suggest that they may have been connected with or caused by foreign scientific or technological developments. There were only one or two that fitted that category. We never really decided who would take responsibility for further investigation if it were shown, convincingly, that a UFO sighting in Australia was of extra-terrestrial origin".

The Joint Intelligence Organisation (the reorganised JIB) maintains a secret BOLIDE file. It still seems to be anchored to the premise that "UFOs" could involve the chance of

retrieval of Soviet hardware and therefore contribute some useful intelligence. It appears JIO have a "rapid intervention" capability, as they have been able to institute prompt widespread ground searches in suspected "hardware" crashes. They do this through "special access" channels. This operation may be similar to US activity operating under the code name Project Moondust.

THE CHIEF OF AIR STAFF (RAAF) & THE UFO

Air Marshal Sir George Jones, who was Chief of Air Staff (RAAF) during World War Two and also undertook what appears to have been the earliest RAAF investigation into UFOs way back in 1930, observed a UFO on October 16th, 1957.

He described it as "a brilliant white light at the bottom of a shadowy shape like a transparent balloon", which travelled very quickly and silently at about 400 mph at some 1,500 feet altitude. Sir George was certain it was not a meteor or reflected light. He described it as travelling in "a purposeful way." He added, "Nothing could shake me from my belief in what I saw. But I wished I had 4 or 5 witnesses. I have reported it, but have been loath to talk of it publically lest people should think I was either an incompetent witness or getting a little screwy in the head".

I had the pleasure of interviewing Sir George about his UFO reminiscences in 1988 when he was 92. I found him to be remarkably lucid in his recollections and certainly would not attribute to him any thoughts of being "a little screwy in the head". One only has to read his autobiography, *From Private to Air Marshall*, published in 1988, to realise just how remarkable and impressively credentialed a witness he was!

CLEAR INTENT AT MARALINGA - 1957

During September and October, 1957, nuclear weapons test series, codenamed ANTLER, were undertaken at Maralinga, South Australia, with kilotonne range nuclear explosions being detonated on September 25th and October 9th. The site was subject to intense security. During that period the integrity of the facility was challenged in an extraordinary fashion.

Just before dusk one evening Royal Air Force Corporal Derek Murray and some colleagues were called out of the Maralinga village canteen to witness a UFO hovering apparently silently over the airfield. The UFO was described as a "magnificent sight", being silver/blue in colour, of a metallic lustre, with a line of "windows" or "portholes" along its edge.

Corporal Murray states that the object could be seen so clearly that they could make out what appeared to be plating on the objects surface.

The duty air traffic controller also ostensibly witnessed the spectacle. He allegedly checked Alice Springs and Edinburgh airfields who reported they did not have anything over their areas. No photographs were taken as the top security status of the area required that all cameras be locked away. These had to be signed in and out when used.

After about 15 minutes (as dusk began to fall) the aerial object left swiftly and silently. In a statement to UK researcher Jenny Randles, which he also sent to me, Murray stated, "I swear to you as a practising Christian this was no dream, no illusion, no fairy story but a solid craft of metallic construction".

(Continued next issue)

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UFO CAUSES TRAFFIC ACCIDENT

(Judith Tonner, Inside-Scotland, 19 February 2003)

UFO is spotted over Kingsgate Retail Park during morning rush-hour.

The appearance of a UFO in the sky above Kingsgate Retail Park last week caused spooked drivers to bump their cars.

Several people reported seeing a huge silver object in the area as they drove past at around 8.45am last Wednesday.

Drivers were so distracted by the bizarre sighting that at least two minor bumps were reported, as the attention of motorists wandered from the more mundane forms of transport before them on the road.

A local woman, who did not wish to be named, contacted the News to describe the experience of a friend who was driving towards the retail park at that time.

She said: "My friend saw something hovering, which was silver in appearance and looked like the dishes you see on the side of television transmitters.

"It was huge, and it was pulsating -he wasn't the only one who saw it, as you couldn't have missed it.

"He saw it and just thought: 'Good God', and was really quite shaken by the whole thing.

"Then the object just suddenly disappeared - it was so strange. My friend thinks the accidents at Kingsgate were a result of other people seeing this thing as well."

The sighting has also intrigued East Kilbride UFO Club, whose members were warned in advance that they might be about to spot something strange in the sky.

Colleagues in Cumbernauld had seen a similar object around half an hour previously, and alerted their South Lanarkshire counterparts that it appeared to be heading in their direction.

Lee Close, of the Anglo-Scottish UFO Research Agency, has been investigating last week's events in tandem with the local UFO club.

He said: "This is the first time I've come across a UFO causing a car crash, although I'm aware of it having happened in America before.

"People in Scotland tend to think: 'Ooh, there's something in the sky' and just carry on, so the fact that it's caused two fender benders is quite unusual.

"The fact that it's in daylight interests us immensely too - previously 95 per cent of sightings were at night, although they're now almost equal between day and night-time."

Anyone who saw last week's UFO or witnessed either of the two reported vehicle bumps is asked to contact Lee on 07957 912500, or Noel Wallace of East Kilbride UFO Club on 07941 157187, and all information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PROJECT RED BOOK

YORKSHIRE DRAGONS

by Richard Freeman

THE BIG GREY MAN (pt 2)

By Andy Roberts

BRITISH BHMs

By Jonathan Downes

SUB ROSA (pt 5)

By Bill Chalker

THE VIEW FROM BRITAIN

By Jenny Randles

TALKIN' BOLLOXINSKI

As I mentioned in a previous issue, my latest tome is about to be released in mass-market hardback in the States, and my publishers, Haphazard House, have given permission for PRB to publish select sections from this classic-in-the-making.

It's an A-Z, and it's got just about everything in it, from A: Adamski, George to Z: Zigmund, Adamski, and is thought by some to be **the** definitive guide to UFOs, the paranormal and related mysteries.

M

MOON: land on it: (did we?)

One of the greatest conspiracy theories of the modern age contends that contrary to popular belief, sense and irrefutable concrete evidence, the Apollo Moon Landings were nothing more than an elaborate hoax, perpetrated by around 10,000 people, all of who never talked.

The theory goes that, in the middle of the Space Race, it was inconceivable that the Russians should reach the moon first. Even though NASA did not have the technology to reach the moon at all.

One of the so-called 'Whistle-blowers' who uses the pseudonym 'Roger Whitaker' and who is a major source to me on this subject, expounded on the fears of that time.

"Originally, the U.S. Government was afraid of the socio-political aspects of Ivan reaching the moon first. But other members of Congress were thinking more on economic lines. They feared that if the Reds staked claim to the moon first, they would have an unlimited supply of green cheese, and could put a stranglehold on the World Cheese Market, holding it to ransom or controlling it completely. Which would have been disastrous, a bit like Goldfinger robbing Fort Knox in that book and film."

Of course, we know now that the Moon *isn't* made of cheese at all, but back then they didn't. Apparently. And they later found that there wasn't a man in it either.

So JFK decided that the US had to "reach" the "Moon" "first", no matter what. And super-

secret plans were made to ensure that they "did".

"The main sticking point was radiation," Whittaker told me. "The space-suits that NASA had been diligently working on were not capable of deflecting the deadly radiation the astronauts would pick up after they passed through the Van Halen belt. The astronauts would have been either killed out there in space, or come back with three heads. Or turned into big cactus-monsters, like something out of Quatermass."

"And why, if they took away so many samples of moon rock, can you not see bits missing when you look up at night? Answer that one, Oberg!"

Another of the whistle-blowers "Percy Edwards" told me that those with Hollywood links attempted to gradually leach the truth to the public with clues in such fare as the James Bond film *Diamonds Are Forever*, and the James Brolin/ O. J. Simpson sci-fi thriller *Capricorn One*.

However, the Secret Cabal within NASA who were behind it all tried to discredit them in return by secretly creating and funding the cult TV show *The Clangers*...stupid little knitted creatures who spoke in...whistles.

Of course, there are those conspiracy theorists who dare to explore even further. They claim that the real reason for faking the moon landings is that there *isn't* actually a Moon at all. The celestial body we have seen smiling benignly down upon us for so long is actually nothing more than an elaborate mock-up, and is in fact only a few hundred feet wide, and about a mile up. Probably suspended on strings or something.

But they're just daft...